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**University Library Committee**

**Minutes**

**June 4, 2020**

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**Attendees:** David Condon, Bettina Cornwell, Beth Harn, Shelley Harshe (ex officio), Mike Peixoto, Margaret Sereno, George Sheridan, Xiaobo Su, Kate Thornhill, Mark Watson

**Absent:** Jesse Cohen, Alex Dossin

**ULC Agenda**

**Interim Dean's wrap-up for FY2020** (Mark Watson)

- During summer 2019, the Center for Media and Educational Technology (CMET) transitioned from the Libraries to Information Services and UO Online. The work of disentangling CMET from library operations was complex and took most of last summer. The CMET website, the last remaining feature, will be moved from the Libraries to Information Services by the end of this spring term.
- For summer 2020, we are preparing for the next phase of Transform IT, during which part of the Library Technology Services staff will transition to User Support Services, responsible for desktop and computing support across campus. The goal is to better democratize user support on campus.
- During late summer and early fall 2019, a modified strategic planning process took place, focusing on initiatives that could be completed within a 12 to 16 month period. Thirteen initiative groups were formed as a result of that planning.
- The Vice Provost and University Librarian search airport interviews were postponed due to COVID-19 travel concerns; the search was suspended shortly after as part of the university's hiring freeze.
- 2020 has been a challenge, with the global spread of COVID-19 and the move to physical distancing and remote learning by spring.
- The Libraries closed to all but library employees on March 24, and many employees started working remotely. Work flows and services rapidly changed to address these new circumstances.
- The success of this transition to remote services has surprised us in many ways, and the return to "normal" will not look the same as pre-COVID times.
- The libraries has created a Remote Work Team, charged with helping figure out how to be a better hybrid organization, with a combination of on-campus and remote work.
- Accompanying this success, however, are many challenges. In addition to hardships and stresses of the pandemic, the university's financial situation is uncertain, in large part due to yet-to-be-determined state funding and fall enrollments. The university was on pace for a record enrollment for fall 2020, but COVID-19 could negatively affect enrollment.
- UO leaders have taken steps to prepare for a less-than-perfect financial situation for the upcoming academic year. They have imposed a hiring freeze—the libraries currently has at least 10 vacancies and expects more to come—and have reduced to 0.55 FTE Career Faculty contracts that are up for renewal—19 librarians are affected. Mark is working with the Provost to try to raise FTEs at least through summer, but not being able to guarantee fulltime for the full year is causing librarian stress. The shortage of staff will become a greater and greater problem.



- Two major ULC achievements this year:
  - The Senate Subcommittee on open Access (SSOA) produced a white paper and a video on how publishing and research could be made more open with faculty action. Thank you to David Condon for doing the lion's share of the work.
  - Under Margaret's leadership, ULC engaged with faculty across campus to understand their concerns and get feedback.

#### **Perspective on NTTF Contracts** (Kate Thornhill, ULC Member)

- Kate, as one of the library's union stewards and as one of the librarians affected by the reduction in FTE, shared the sentiments expressed during a meeting with 23 library faculty:
- Librarians expressed feeling like they don't matter, like their expertise and commitment to the university have been thrown out the window.
- Uncertainty is one of the hardest thing, causing stress and fears.
- They are struggling with feelings of disinvestment while still loving the libraries and what they do.
- Treatment of term by term FTE increase creates many challenges for planning teaching, research, and collection development work, which will directly impact tenure faculty, career NTTF, and the UO research enterprise.
- Historically, there have been cuts to librarians. The UO Libraries no longer has a dedicated SOJC librarian, the music and dance librarian has been reduced from two to one, and the hiring freeze has left vacant our University Archivist and Historian position.
- Uncertainty about how librarians affected by the reduction will be able to support those that report to them, which would affect student employees.
- 92 faculty members have provided testimonials in support of librarians, and Oregon State University Librarians have also provided letter of support.
- For more information, please go to: <https://www.uolibrariansunited.com/>
- ULC discussion:
  - It was agreed that the ULC advocate for librarians by writing a letter of support.
  - The libraries is vital to the kind of university we are. Librarians contribute to teaching, research, and services. Supporting the libraries is an investment.
  - Margaret as committee chair will draft the letter and share out to committee members for feedback.

#### **Senate Subcommittee on Open Access (SSOA) Update** (David Condon)

- The committee successfully completed its goals for the year, with the publication of a white paper and video on open access: <https://openaccess.uoregon.edu/>
- Part of the group may be brought back next year to continue the work.

#### **Thanks to Outgoing Members**

- Thank you to Margaret Sereno, Xiaobo Su, Kate Thornhill, Jesse Cohen

#### **ULC Chair for 2020/2021**

- Alexandre Dossin has agreed to be chair for 2020/2021.